

Message

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Subject: PNWED | January 12 meeting and agenda
Attachments: PNWED_January 12, 2021_Agenda.pdf

Dear PNW Environmental Directors,

I am sending you the below message on behalf of Bill Ross (copied on this email). The January 12 meeting agenda is attached to this email. Please let us know if you have any questions!

Best,
Shelby

Greetings,

I hope you are easing into some peaceful time off and staying lucky and smart about the pesky virus. Thanks for spending time with me to plan the agenda for the next Pacific Northwest Environmental Directors meeting, which will be held on January 12 by Zoom from 9-noon PST. At the meeting we will be able to welcome Michelle Pirzadeh, Deputy Regional Administrator for EPA Region 10, who will be Acting Regional Administrator as of January 21. As always, we have a full agenda and I have tried to hone down what the salient issues are that you all want to share and discuss. So I have added possible meeting prep/homework descriptions of how each session will be kicked off as well as how you each can best be prepared to participate productively. Of course, the actual conversations will go where you want them to go in real time! The agenda topics that resonated with you are:

1. **Likely priorities of the new US Administration and the new Mandate of the British Columbia government.** While the former's priorities are still somewhat speculative, the rationales that President-Elect Biden accompanies his Cabinet and other appointments with give a strong sense of what he believes is important to accomplish. For the latter, BC has a one party mandate after this fall's election and the direction for the next coming years has been laid out to each Minister. Chris can give a wrap up of what the Trump Administration has or will complete by January 20. Kevin can give an overview of the priorities of Premier Horgan's new term, and all can share what they think, hope, or fear the Biden Administration will likely focus on.
2. **First nations/Tribal relationships and the evolving engagement and influence of these relationships in environmental, land use, and energy development decision making by the federal governments, states, and provinces.** While the PNWED group has visited this topic briefly in recent meetings, we haven't spent significant time sharing how the first nation/tribal engagement landscape is changing due to new legislation, precedential

litigation, and recent significant decision making and involvement of native people. Naina can lay out what the Canadian federal government is doing to implement the UN principles of the rights of indigenous people, and I ask that all bring specific recent examples of your interactions with tribes/first nations on important decisions and be ready to discuss the future trajectory/precedents these interactions might represent. How you see tribal/first nations issues intersect (or not) with environmental equity goals would also be good to share.

3. **Pace of climate change activity in 2021.** While many of your jurisdictions have continued to work on abating greenhouse gas emissions, the new US administration will be placing significant emphasis on this 'existential crisis' as President-Elect Biden has called it. The Pacific Coast Collaborative, of which Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia are members (along with California) will be active in 2021, and there will be other voluntary multi-jurisdictional sub-national efforts. I ask that you bring what you are doing on this issue, particularly how your jurisdiction is moving to a 'whole government approach' (and not just engaging the environmental agency); what urgency or enhanced ambitions you are working under; how adaptation and climate resiliency is becoming more important, including its contribution to any green economic recovery/infrastructure programs you are supporting; and your perception of the value of multi-jurisdictional efforts to support your individual efforts.
4. **Not all things COVID!** You all wanted to touch upon two issues about COVID: 1) what plans, if any, have you made to the workforce location issue after COVID no longer impacts this (either to eventually go back to your governmental offices or continue to have significant at-home or off-site policies and what employee discretion on either are you contemplating); 2) If, and if so how, the use of remote inspections and other tools developed during COVID will continue after COVID. I ask that you bring your thoughts and questions to these questions.
5. As always, there was a small slew of issues that you thought might be of interest or that would be good to at least highlight if there is time. We can see how much time we have left when we get to these and decide at the meeting which to address.
 - a. **Continued evolution of circular economy approaches to reducing waste and reducing/reusing/recycling materials.** The ad hoc group that you endorsed will be meeting on January 8 to share these approaches and I will report out briefly on what transpired. You all should bring what your jurisdiction is doing that you believe others would benefit from hearing.
 - b. **State concerns over some policy perspective/decisions of the Trump Administration that may/may not receive attention from the Biden Administration.** While not all states may have the same views, I list those that were mentioned by one or more of you: changes to 401 certification of water quality issues on federal permits; modified federal jurisdiction over waters of the United States and what states are doing about those waters no longer covered under federal jurisdiction.; utilization of the Toxic Release Inventory to list mining waste as a toxic release; and PFOS treatment at off-site permitted facilities.
6. **Next meeting, time, and platform.** Several of you wondered and hoped if the traditional summer meeting might be able to be in person. (The traditional timeframe for that meeting when it was held in person was from June-early September based on your schedules.) Also, several of you mentioned that having a meeting that focused on habitat issues, landscape resiliency, endangered species, the value and function of major land conservation initiatives (such as Yukon to Yellowstone and the 30by30 aspiration for land percentage conservation), etc. were some of the ways you talked about this. Again, several of you thought that having a speaker to stimulate you in this discussion would be valuable, which may requires doing this when we can again have in person meetings. We can talk about this and you can decide the next meeting time, platform, and potential agenda.

Let me know if you have any questions or concerns about the agenda. I look forward to speaking with all of you soon.

Cheers, Bill

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